



United States Mission to the OSCE

Interpretative Statement on the Extension of the Deployment of OSCE Observers to Two Russian Checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian Border Pursuant to IV.I(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure

As delivered by Deputy Political Counselor Jennifer Bosworth
to the Special Permanent Council, Vienna
October 22, 2014

In connection with the adoption of the Decision for the Extension of Deployment of OSCE Observers to Two Russian Checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian Border, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The U.S. finds it deeply regrettable that the Russian Federation would not consider expanding the geographic scope of the observer mission, despite requests from other participating States. We further regret that Russia refused to agree to even a modest increase to the number of observers, as requested by the Chief Observer, to reduce the excessive workload faced by the observer mission's small working teams. We once again have to accept a limited-scope mission, covering just two border checkpoints—which account for approximately one kilometer of the 2,300 kilometer border. We are concerned that due to Russia's undue restrictions of its work, the mission will be unable to monitor the extent to which Russia is participating in or facilitating the flow of illegal arms, funding, and personnel to support the separatists in eastern Ukraine or provide any meaningful assurance that Russia is acting to stop that flow of support to those separatists.

We note that Step 4 of the September 5 Minsk Protocol delineates a clear role for the OSCE in monitoring and verification on both sides of the Ukrainian-Russian international border, and the creation of a security zone in the border areas of Russia and Ukraine. There are strong linkages between ceasefire monitoring and border monitoring—and the OSCE approach to both of these activities must not be restricted by one participating State. The Russian Federation has prevented the expansion of this mandate to include other border checkpoints and monitoring between checkpoints, and, in so doing, Russia raises serious questions about its resolve to implement this critical element of the Minsk Protocol.

Therefore, we call upon the Permanent Council to remain seized of the matter and continue discussions with the aim of expanding the mission sufficiently to permit a true accounting of the situation on the Russian-Ukrainian border.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the Journal of the Day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.